

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

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PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8219

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 9372

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJ: MORE ATTACKS ON CONFUCIUS

REF: HONG KONG 8259

SUMMARY. PRC MEDIA CONTINUE TO CARRY CRITICISM OF CONFUCIUS. IT IS HARD TO IDENTIFY A SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL TARGET. IN BROAD TERMS, THE ATTACK IS AIMED AT ANY RETREAT FROM THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. END SUMMARY.

1. PRC MEDIA SINCE THE TENTH PARTY CONGRESS HAVE CONTINUED TO CARRY CRITICISM OF CONFUCIUS, INCORPORATING IT WITH STUDY OF THER CONGRESS DOCUMENTS. TWO ARTICLES FROM KUANG MING JIH PAO OF SEPTEMBER 11 OFFER MORE EXTENSIVE CLUES TO THE CONTEMPORARY "CRIMES" OF THE "FACTION HONORING CONFUCIUS" THAN DID THE PRE-CONGRESS BLAST (REFTEL), BUT LEAVE US GUESSING ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF ANY SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL TARGET AT THIS TIME.

2. BOTH ARTICLES IN CONCLUSION NAME LIU SHAO-CHI AND LIN PIAO
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AND "OTHERS LIKE THEM" AS GLORIFIERS OF CONFUCIUS. ONE ARTICLE

IN CONCLUSION ADDITIONALLY CITES PREMIER CHOU, IN HIS TENTH CONGRESS REPORT, AS CALLING FOR CONTINUING STRUGGLE TO CHANGE THE "SUPERSTRUCTURE" (A NON-CONFUCIAN STANCE). THIS IS THE FIRST TIME CHOU HAS BEEN BROUGHT DIRECTLY INTO THE CURRENT DISCUSSION OF CONFUCIUS, BUT CHOU IS BEING WIDELY CITED IN MEDIA NOW AS A CONSEQUENCE OF HIS HAVING DELIVERED THE CONGRESS REPORT. IN THEIR SUBSTANCE, THE ARTICLES ATTACK CONFUCIUS FOR GOING "AGAINST THE TIDE OF HISTORY," BEING HOSTILE TO "NEW BORN THINGS," OPPOSING CHANGES IN THE "SUPERSTRUCTURE," DEFENDING "OLD PERSONALITIES," AND SEEKING TO RESTORE OLD RITES (RULES OF DISCIPLINE) AND TO ENCOURAGE "SELF-DENIAL" AND "SELF-RESTRAINT" (POLITICAL).

3. AN INDICTMENT OF LIN EMERGES FROM SOME OF THESE CHARGES WHEN THEY ARE COMPARED WITH HIS PURPORTED CRITICISM OF MAO IN THE "571" DOCUMENTS. HOWEVER, LIN'S CRIMES ALONG THESE LINES HAVE BEEN WELL-PUBLICIZED IN THE PRC AND ANY USE OF VEILED ALLEGORY TO DISCUSS THEM AT THIS TIME SEEMS UNNECESSARILY AMBIGUOUS IF LIN AND HIS GROUP ARE THE ONLY TARGETS. (IT IS HARD TO ASSOCIATE LIN WITH ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE "OLD PERSONALITIES" WHEN HE IS CREDITED WITH PURGING SO MANY. THERE IS ALSO A CURIOUS REFERENCE IN ONE ARTICLE TO CONFUCIUS HAVING BEEN "ENCIRCLED BY THE MOB AND STARVED," WHICH BRINGS TO MIND CHOU, BESEIGED IN HIS OFFICE FOR TWO DAYS BY RED GUARDS DURING THE AUGUST 1967 MANIC PHASE OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. EDGAR SNOW CALLED IT CHOU'S MOST PERILOUS MOMENT.)

4. IN SUM, THE ATTACK ON CONFUCIUS ALMOST CERTAINLY GOES BEYOND LIN AND HIS IMMEDIATE GROUP. BROADLY, WE READ IT AS A CHALLENGE TO ANY ADVOCATE OF A RETURN TO PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION DOMESTIC POLICIES AND PRACTICES. (THE ARTICLES ALSO TAKE CRACKS AT CONFUCIUS FOR BEING THE DARLING OF IMPERIALISTS. THIS ASPECT IS DEVELOPED ONLY BRIEFLY AND IN THE CONTEXT OF PAST JAPANESE AGGRESSION AGAINST CHINA.) IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF A CONGRESS WHICH CONFIRMED HIM AS THE RANKING SUCCESSOR, IT WOULD SEEM UNLIKELY THAT CHOU IS BEING DIRECTLY CONFRONTED. HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT PREPARATIONS FOR THE COMING NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS FIGURE IN THESE ATTACKS ON CONFUCIUS. SOME OF THE CANDIDATES FOR INCLUSION IN CHOU'S STATE COUNCIL, AND THEIR POLICY VIEWS, COULD BE IMMEDIATE TARGETS.

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